

Press Release
April 12, 2019

“The Lobster Quadrille”: Photographs by Roselyne Titaud, Herbert Bayer, Jim Dine, Ruth Hallensleben, Willi Moegle, and Anonymous Masters

An exhibition taking place as part of “Artist meets Archive” and the Internationale Photoszene Köln

On view: 3 May to 21 July 2019 in Room 3

Opening with artist talk and presentation of the book accompanying the show:
Sunday, 5 May, 2 pm, Die Photographische Sammlung/SK Stiftung Kultur, Room 3

“The opportunity I was given as part of the Artist meets Archive project to immerse myself in the extraordinary collection of Die Photographische Sammlung/SK Stiftung Kultur in order to put together out of this ‘photographic family’ an exhibition related to my own work was all too tempting.

If Bernd and Hilla Becher are my parents, then Eugène Atget and August Sander are my grandfathers, and Stephen Shore, Boris Becker, and Petra Wittmar my cousins, etc. So how could I resist seeing my work exhibited alongside those whom I so admire and who have been such an inspiration to me?”

Roselyne Titaud

And yet the French artist Roselyne Titaud (b.1977) does not present the photographic works she knows best in the exhibition she has curated and titled “The Lobster Quadrille,” but instead takes up the challenge of unearthing lesser-known images. She focuses on “hidden treasures,” discovering in them a new source of inspiration. Titaud has arranged this diverse set of works into a visual alphabet that offers fresh perspectives and possibilities for interpretation. This explains the title she chose, which refers to a chapter from Lewis Carroll’s novel *Alice in Wonderland* in which various marine animals strike up a colorful round dance, changing partners to try out ever-new constellations. This open and dynamic system of references serves as a fitting metaphor for the artist’s exhibition concept.

Roselyne Titaud’s images afford us glimpses of the world of things in the form of the decorative or functional objects on display in private households. The color photographs of interiors and domestic still lifes were made for the most part in Berlin and France. Living spaces people create for themselves are thus at the heart of the photographer’s detailed examination. Her motifs tell us something about personal preferences and tastes but also have a temporal component as memories of a particular moment. Many of Titaud’s images take us back to an era when the aesthetics and materials of furnishing fashions and styles were different than they are today. And the arrangements ultimately also reflect lifestyles and family relations, allowing us to infer emotional atmospheres and social structures as well as economic conditions. We discover here porcelain and glass in a variety of shapes and colors, as vases or fruit bowls for example; along with decorative lace or woven fabrics with

varied patterns and fringe; cushions, throws, and coverlets on armchairs; glass cabinets; chests of drawers; and small tables on which objects are carefully displayed.

In Roselyne Titaud's oeuvre, these private settings are correlated with certain forms of museum presentation, represented here by photographs taken in natural history museums. She for example did an eponymous photographic ensemble at the Museum Am Löwentor in Stuttgart in 2009. Artificial fish of all kinds populate the photographs of showcases she came upon there. In the dioramas, the color blue indicates a watery habitat, accompanied by a replicated sandy seabed and plants. The imagined world inhabited by the dinosaurs is also illustrated here, reconstructed based on fossils and leading us far back into the history of the planet earth. The artist juxtaposes these compositions sprung from human imagination with a collection recently acquired by Die Photographische Sammlung/SK Stiftung Kultur of shots of department store display windows dating from 1967 by unknown photographers. The artificial world of goods seen here, with its outdated clothing tastes and fashions, seems alien and curious to us today—every bit as exotic as the museum panoramas of simulated animals and plants. "*The anonymous photographs of Karstadt shop windows from the 1960s inspired me with their humor and lightheartedness. They also gave me the urge to explore my own archives and bring to light again the photos from the 'Am Löwentor' series,*" says Titaud. The shop window decorations from the 1960s breathe the same zeitgeist that can be found in many of the private still lifes photographed by Titaud.

The world of interior decoration is also on view in the black-and-white photographs the artist selected by Ruth Hallensleben (1898–1977), who is represented in the show with a project commissioned by a wallpaper company in Gummersbach, dating between 1954 and 1959. Hallensleben worked in Cologne from the mid-1930s to the 1960s as a successful industrial photographer. The photographs presented here show typical 1950s patterned wallpapers with geometric or plant forms. Included in the pictures as props are pieces of furniture such as an armchair or a wall mirror, all displaying the curvaceous lines popular at the time.

Titaud's interest in furnishings is likewise reflected in the photographs she chose by Willi Moegle (1897–1989). Chairs and a table he depicted caught her attention. Moegle worked as an object and advertising photographer for numerous companies and was acclaimed for his formally strict and clearly composed images, which often highlight the sculptural qualities of objects. Roselyne Titaud displays these images alongside her 2009 series *Étendus*, which shows sculptures from the 14th and 16th centuries in the Musée du Louvre, in most cases as details in small-format black-and-white photographs. This mode of representation creates a high degree of abstraction, lending the images a surreal look. The historical saint and Christ figures become pure form and surface, disintegrating into their constituent components—just as the artist Herbert Bayer (1900–1985) effectively fragmented himself in his self-portrait of 1932.

Roselyne Titaud studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Saint-Étienne and has been living in Berlin for the last few years.

Press photos for the exhibitions are available in the Press Section on the SK Stiftung Kultur website, direct link: <http://bit.ly/2U4FcaJ>

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Admission: €5.50 (reduced €3), free the first Monday in the month! Regular guided tours: Every Sunday at 3pm, cost: regular admission + €2 for the tour

Closed on Good Friday, 19 April, open on all other holidays.

Special opening hours for the Photoszene Köln 2019/Artist Meets Archive:

Friday, 3 May: 2 to 10 pm

Saturday and Sunday, 4/5 May: 11 am – 7 pm

Friday, 10 May: 2 to 9 pm